

We know that to the 250 million Americans, Canada is a small market. But for them, the Free Trade Agreement means much more than trying to sell or buy consumer goods.

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It shows that they can get along with another country. It sets the scene for future negotiations with the world. The ultimate purpose of the Free Trade Agreement, Mr. Chairman, is not to establish trade between two countries, but to establish world trade. What we want is a world market for our products. If you remember, some time ago, we clearly showed that Canada could compete with any other country in the area of high technology. Canada, and I should say even Quebec, boasts the best engineers in the world. Laval has produced good engineers, Mr. Chairman. I am one of those engineers and I am not afraid to say so. There is a large firm in Montreal called Lavalin which competes on the world market. It is the only engineering consultant firm to have succeeded in getting into Russia. And that's no small feat, Mr. Chairman. These people are able to compete on the world market, which means that if we can sign agreements with our American partners, we will be able to tackle the world market, as well as sell our expertise, goods and services. Of course, the Liberals will say that we will never be able to achieve that goal, because they themselves were never able to prove that in the past. They were never able to set up a system to help us expand.

As far as the implementation of free trade is concerned, Mr. Chairman, they claimed during the election campaign that we were unable to foresee its impact.

Mr. Chairman, we are saying that custom duties will be entirely eliminated for approximately 15 per cent of our bilateral trade. As soon as the agreement is implemented, goods made in Canada or in the United States such as computers and computer hardware—this is high technology—fur, clothing, frozen fresh fish,—I wish to pay tribute to my colleague the Minister of State for Small Businesses and Tourism (Mr. Valcourt) who clearly demonstrated last night what he will do with cod. Animal feed, skis, skates, whisky—which may be somewhat important but which will be able to cross the border tax free. At the same date, custom duties will be reduced by 20 per cent on approximately one-third of all the other goods exported or imported. For instance, machinery, paint, furniture, paper and paper products. The Minister himself mentioned paper products yesterday.

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He said that we were supplying the raw material in Canada, but that the Americans were making the finished product; with a new free trade agreement, we could make it here. Hardwood plywood, oil, and spare parts for cars; this will affect my friend the Hon. Member for Duvernay (Mr. Della Noce) and Luigi. These duties will be reduced by another 20 per cent until these goods account for approximately 50 per cent of our bilateral trade.

Let us deal now with embargoes, Mr. Chairman. Canada will lift its embargoes on second hand planes and cars which are 8 years old or older, but this restriction as to the age of second hand cars will be gradually eliminated by as much as 2 per cent per year until January 1, 1993. Of course, there is a lot of detailed planning behind all of this.

Residence permits for businessmen. As you know, Mr. Chairman, I tried one day to go and work in the United States as an engineer and I found it very difficult for a Canadian professional to be hired in the United States and try to secure a position there without being sponsored by an American firm. And this caused a lot of problems because the company which wanted to do business in the United States market had first to ask for a working permit there which they could never obtain. So they were compelled to join an American corporation to sponsor a Canadian corporation. With free trade, new rules for temporary visits to the United States by business people, professionals, merchants, investors and persons transferred within a company will take effect for Canadian citizens. That seems clear to me—it is not hard to understand.

An Hon. Member: American citizens too.

Mr. Ricard: American citizens as well, that is true. You are right, sir, it is free trade we are getting into. So if we go down there, they have the right to come up here, to our country. And I think that we are big enough, mature enough and man enough to accept it and to work with the agreed upon rules.

So, Mr. Chairman, looking at all that, we easily realize that it cannot be bad for Canadians.

What will be the effects on a province like Quebec? For four years, we have heard the Liberals here tell us that the Montreal area was being neglected by the federal Government. The Montreal area has the labour force, the infrastructure, everything we need to give those people the chance to take on the world market, the